

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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TAGS: TECH, IN, US
SUBJECT: INDO-US NUCLEAR RELATIONS

1. AN EDITORIAL IN THE JUNE 9 "STATESMAN" REFERS TO
"REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON, EVIDENTLY BASED ON OFFICIAL
BRIEFINGS", AS SUGGESTING THAT SAFEGUARDS AND THEIR
BEARING ON FUTURE FUEL SUPPLIES FOR TARAPUR WILL BE
THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE TO BE DISCUSSED BY PRIME
MINISTER DESAI AND PRESIDENT CARTER. MOREOVER, THE
PAPER STATES, THE US HAS "CONTRIVED" TO MAKE THE
SHIPMENT OF 7.6 TONS OF FUEL TO TARAPUR THE CENTRAL
ISSUE IN INDO-US RELATIONS AT THE MOMENT. THE EDITORIAL
WARNS THAT " IF MR. DESAI SUCCEEDS IN PERSUADING U.S.
CONGRESSMEN TO ALLOW THE SHIPMENT, THERE WILL BE TALK
OF A SPECIAL AND MAJOR CONCESSION TO INDIA. THAT NO
FURTHER SHIPMENT IS LIKELY EVEN BEFORE THE COMING INTO
FORCE OF THE NEW U.S. LAW ON NUCLEAR EXPORTS WOULD BE
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 08992 091207Z

FORGOTTEN IN THE EUPHORIA OVER WHAT WILL BE DESCRIBED AS
FRESH EVIDENCE OF CLOSER INDO-AMERICAN TIES. TARAPUR'S
PROBLEM WILL IN NO WAY BE SOLVED."

2. IF THE US IS HOPING THAT A GRATEFUL DESAI WILL MODIFY
HIS STAND AGAINST FULL SCOPE SAFEGUARDS, THE EDITORIAL
WANTS WASHINGTON TO KNOW "THAT MR. DESAI WOULD NOT BE IN

A POSITION TO CHANGE THE BASIC INDIAN STAND EVEN IF ALL HIS CONDITIONS WERE FULFILLED... THE INDIAN PUBLIC IS CONVINCED THAT 'FULLSCOPE SAFEGUARDS' ARE UNACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE AND AGAINST THE SPECIFIC INTERESTS OF THE INDIAN NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM." NO INDIAN GOVERNMENT, THE EDITORIAL DECLARES, CAN RISK WHAT WOULD BE GENERALLY REGARDED AS A "SELL-OUT."

3. THE "STATESMAN"NEVERTHELESS BELIEVES THAT INDIAN PUBLIC OPINION FAVORS FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN INDO-US RELATIONS. WHILE US NUCLEAR POLICY TOWARD INDIA WILL REMAIN "UNHELPFUL", IN THE EDITORIAL'S VIEW, THE BASIS OF THE INDO-AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING SHOULD SURVIVE "EVEN THE INTRACTABLE PROBLEM OF TARAPUR... A DISPUTE OVER A CONSIGNMENT OF FUEL, OR FUTURE FUEL SUPPLIES FOR A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DISTORT THE WHOLE GAMUT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO MAJOR NATIONS."

4. THE INDIAN PRESS GAVE WIDE COVERAGE JUNE 9 TO DESAI'S BBC TELEVISION INTERVIEW, DURING WHICH HE WONDERED HOW THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES ARE "QUALIFIED" TO ASK NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES TO ACCEPT SAFEGUARDS. "LET THEM BEHAVE FIRST AND I WILL BEHAVE," HE REPORTEDLY TOLD THE BBC, ADDING THAT " I AM BEHAVING WITHOUT THAT." THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO REITERATED INDIA'S RENUNCIATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 08992 091207Z

5. THE PRIME MINISTER IS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE SAID DURING A JUNE 8 PRESS CONFERENCE IN LONDON THAT NPT AND THE SUPPLY OF ENRICHED URANIUM FOR THE TARAPUR REACTOR CAME UP ONLY INCIDENTALLY IN HIS DISCUSSIONS THERE AND THAT THEY PROVOKED NO PARTICULAR DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS.
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